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Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, DC 20505

## DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

19 November 1986

Mozambique: Short-term Outlook for the Chissano Government

## Summary

The selection of Foreign Minister Joaquim Chissano--generally considered a pragmatist--to succeed President Machel strongly suggests to us that the new government in Maputo will attempt to continue the domestic and foreign policies of former President Machel. Despite the country's massive economic and military problems, we believe Chissano will focus first on consolidating his control over the government in Maputo. [redacted]

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Chissano has few resources and options for dealing with Mozambique's problems. He assumes office with a divided party and demoralized military, and at a time when the RENAMO insurgency has made significant military gains and the economy is near collapse. We believe the most immediate threat is likely to come from potential rivals who could be tempted to move against him before he has time to consolidate his position. [redacted]

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This memorandum was requested by Charles Freeman, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of African Affairs. The paper was written by [redacted] Office of African and Latin American Analysis. A contribution was provided [redacted] the Office of Leadership Analysis. This paper was coordinated with the Directorate of Operations. Questions and Comments are welcome any may be directed to the Chief, Africa Division, ALA [redacted]

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We cannot discount the possibility that a sharp deterioration in the military situation could convince Chissano that he has no choice but to make a radical break with past policy. Under this scenario, the risk is that he would turn decisively toward the Soviet Union, citing the threat posed by the South African-backed insurgency.

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Chissano's selection as Mozambique's second President since independence from Portugal in 1975 came quickly, without the widely-expected succession struggle. Although we lack details of FRELIMO's closed deliberations, US Embassy reporting suggests that in choosing Chissano the Mozambican leadership operated in a relatively orderly and collegial fashion. Since his inauguration on 6 November, Chissano has held a meeting of the Politburo and publicly pledged to continue Machel's foreign and domestic policies. Thus far key actors in the Machel administration continue to hold their positions.

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#### Challenges to Authority

Chissano's most immediate task, in our judgment, will be to hold together an already fragile political consensus until he can consolidate his power. In particular, Chissano--who takes office lacking Machel's broad popularity--must maintain the loyalty of the demoralized 35,000-man military and balance competing ethnic, racial, and ideological factions jockeying for position. Although these groups are likely to give him the benefit of the doubt early on in the interest of national unity, we believe Chissano almost certainly will have to prove his political mettle by dealing with challenges that could come from one or more of several quarters.

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#### A Discouraged Military.

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Chissano--who now holds the rank of major general--served in the independence struggle as head of the party's secret service. His more recent preoccupation with the duties of Foreign Minister has probably limited opportunities to cultivate close military relationships.

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and more recently the Embassy in Malawi have reported that the Mozambican Army long ago lost its incentive to pursue the counterinsurgency against the increasingly successful Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO).

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More recently, [ ] has followed through with Machel's plans to replace Mabote with a lesser known officer, Army Political Commissar Major General Armando Panguene. [ ]

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Tribal and Racial Tensions. Chissano also must contend with potentially destabilizing tribal and racial rivalries, which frequently troubled Machel. Like Machel, Chissano is a Shangaan, a southern minority ethnic group that traditionally has dominated FRELIMO. The Shangaan, however, comprise less than a fourth of the country's 14 million people. RENAMO, on the other hand, draws heavily on support from the Ndau tribe in central Mozambique and more recently from the Sena and Makua ethnic groups in the central and northern regions. In our judgment, Chissano not only will have to wrestle with influential Shangaans who may believe the time is ripe to try to remove rivals from key positions, but also from non-Shangaans watching closely for signs of ethnic favoritism. (See map on ethnic groups) [ ]

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Complicating ethnic divisions are longstanding racial tensions between blacks, mulattoes, and the small number of whites who remained in Mozambique after independence. Black Mozambican resentment against generally better educated, wealthier mulatto and white countrymen has periodically surfaced in FRELIMO. We believe that in the current uncertain political climate Chissano is likely to come under renewed pressure from some black nationalists to oust or demote influential mulatto officials such as senior Politburo member Marcelino dos Santos, Security Minister Vieira, or Jacinto Veloso, Maputo's white Cooperation Minister. [ ]

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Ideological Splits. In our judgment, conflicts in ideology among key FRELIMO players are likely to sharpen in the absence of Machel, who was the only Mozambican official capable of crafting a broad consensus among the various factions. US Embassy reporting indicates that one end of FRELIMO's ideological spectrum is marked by a small, tightly knit group of pro-Soviet hardliners led by Marcelino dos Santos and Minister of State Guebuza, who seek closer ties with Moscow, distrust the West, and strongly oppose the Nkomati nonaggression pact with South

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**Figure 2**  
**Ethnic Composition in Mozambique**



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Africa negotiated in early 1984. This faction and its followers also reportedly favor resuming substantial support to the African National Congress (ANC), and are committed to seeking a military victory over RENAMO.

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Opposed to the hardliners is a larger but less cohesive group of "pragmatists" and less doctrinaire Marxists, sometimes described as nationalists. Led by Chissano, Defense Minister Chipande and Prime Minister Machungo, this faction has sought a balance between superpowers and welcomed aid from all sources, according to our Embassy in Maputo. Although sympathizing with the goals of the ANC, they have questioned the costs of supporting the group, and recognize the value of dialogue with Pretoria.

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#### Fending Off RENAMO

Insurgent Gains. We believe Chissano's ability to consolidate power at home will depend in large measure on how quickly and effectively he is able to deal with the estimated 15,000 RENAMO insurgents, who have made unprecedented military gains in central and northern Mozambique. According to US Embassy and press reporting, in the last six months the South African-backed insurgents have increased attacks on economic facilities in central Manica and Sofala provinces along the Beira transportation corridor--including four attacks on the rail line and at least two raids on the oil pipeline that parallels the rail route.

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More recently, the insurgents have been active in the north; they have sabotaged a major rail bridge link between Beira and Malawi across the Zambezi River and overrun extensive territory bordering Malawi. The guerrillas also have launched well-coordinated attacks on a number of towns and districts in Tete and Zambezia provinces, forcing large numbers of civilians and soldiers to cross into Malawi seeking food and safehaven, according to Embassy reporting.

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Thus far guerrilla attacks near the capital--traditionally FRELIMO's stronghold--have been intermittent and small-scale [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] In addition, we expect the insurgents to attempt more sabotage along the two southern rail lines linking Maputo to South Africa and Zimbabwe.

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RENAMO also appears to have launched a more aggressive and well-organized public relations campaign in an attempt to capitalize on recent military successes and Machel's death. RENAMO spokesmen have claimed that they are prepared to intensify their military efforts--even to attack Zimbabwe--and have no plans to scale down their military campaign. [REDACTED]

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Government Weaknesses. Mozambique's battered armed forces have shown little ability to counter RENAMO's recent moves. US Embassy reporting indicates most Mozambican troops continue to be in garrison and to avoid combat. Defections to RENAMO also have been reported, and last month nearly 2,000 government troops fled to Malawi to avoid RENAMO's forces. Even the addition of some 5,000 Zimbabwean troops has not appreciably improved the government's military position in central and northern Mozambique, where local support for the insurgents is strong and rough terrain causes resupply problems. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] that at least in the short run it remains capable of retaining control of most areas, particularly major cities, in the northeast and south. [REDACTED]

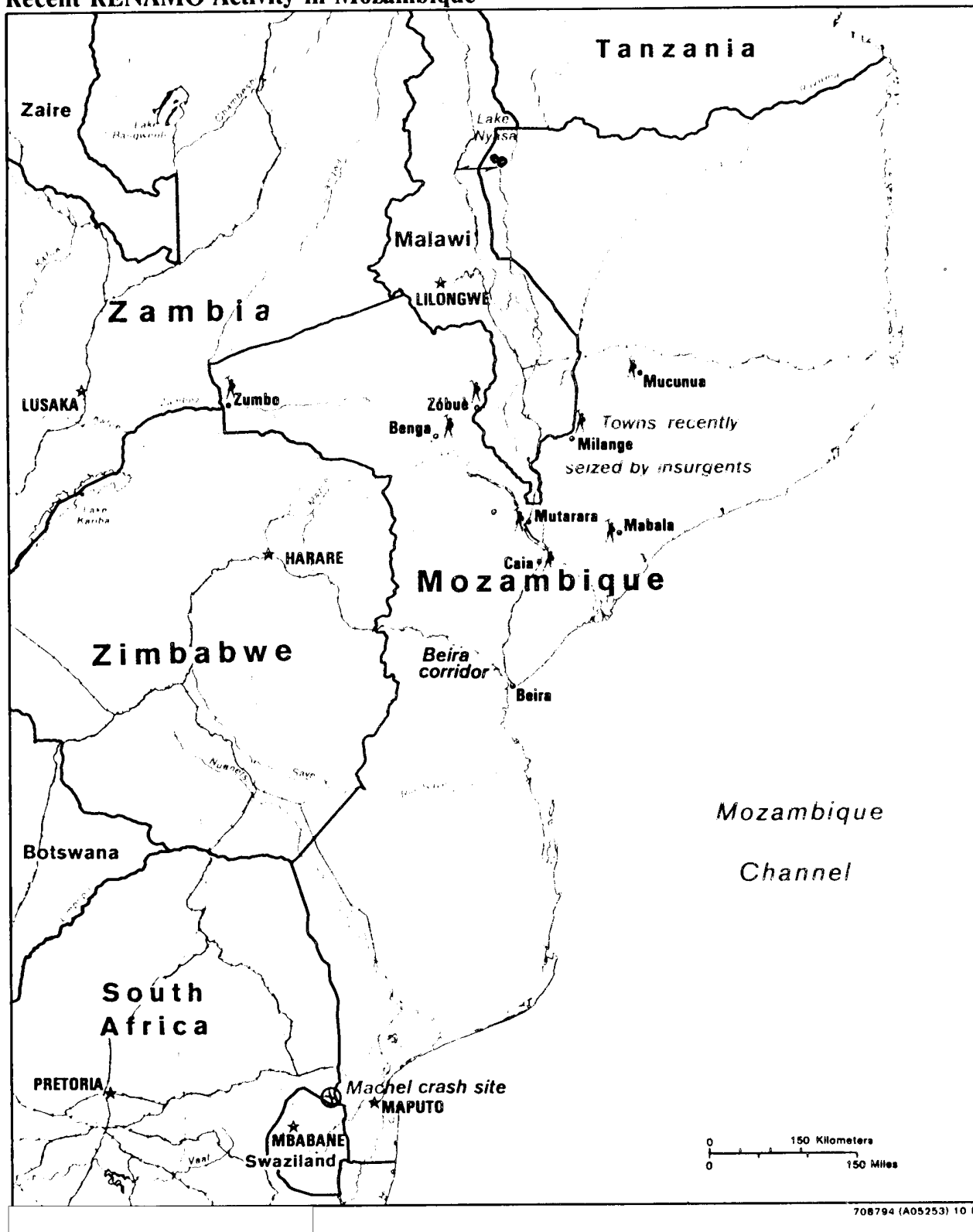
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US Embassy reporting indicates that Machel had begun to address security problems before his death and we expect Chissano will make these issues a priority as well. Earlier this year, for example, the Army had begun to reorganize large and unwieldy brigades into smaller units, and to retrain and reequip both officers and troops with British, Zimbabwean, Tanzanian, and Soviet assistance. According to press reports, Machel--citing South African and Malawian support to RENAMO--also had been urging Zimbabwe to strengthen further its military support, and called on Tanzania to reconsider its previous refusals to supply assistance. [REDACTED]

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In our judgment, however, there are no near term steps that Mozambique can take that will decisively shift the war in the government's favor. The most the government can hope for in the near term is to work to win the confidence

### Recent RENAMO Activity in Mozambique



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of the increasingly frustrated military commanders and slow insurgent gains. [REDACTED]

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### Coping with Economic Deterioration

Although we believe Chissano will continue to back Machel's economic reform program launched in 1983, the decisions he must make in the next several months are likely to prove politically unpopular. According to US Embassy reporting, discussions with the IMF at the time of Machel's death probably included commitments by Maputo to impose a large devaluation, cut 30,000 employees from the government payroll, raise interest rates, and eliminate subsidies to public corporations. In return, the government hopes to negotiate a IMF loan and to reschedule payments on its \$3.0 billion foreign debt with the Paris Club in April or May. [REDACTED]

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Gaining additional food aid from Western donors will be among Chissano's most pressing economic priorities during the next few months, in our view. Deaths from starvation already are occurring in Niassa, Gaza, and Inhambane provinces, according to press reports, and up to 3.5 - 4.0 million people throughout the country face food shortages before the next harvests in April, according to US Embassy reporting. Aid commitments and deliveries thus far total about 280,000 tons, well short of the 440,000 tons the Embassy estimates are needed. (See map on food shortages) [REDACTED]

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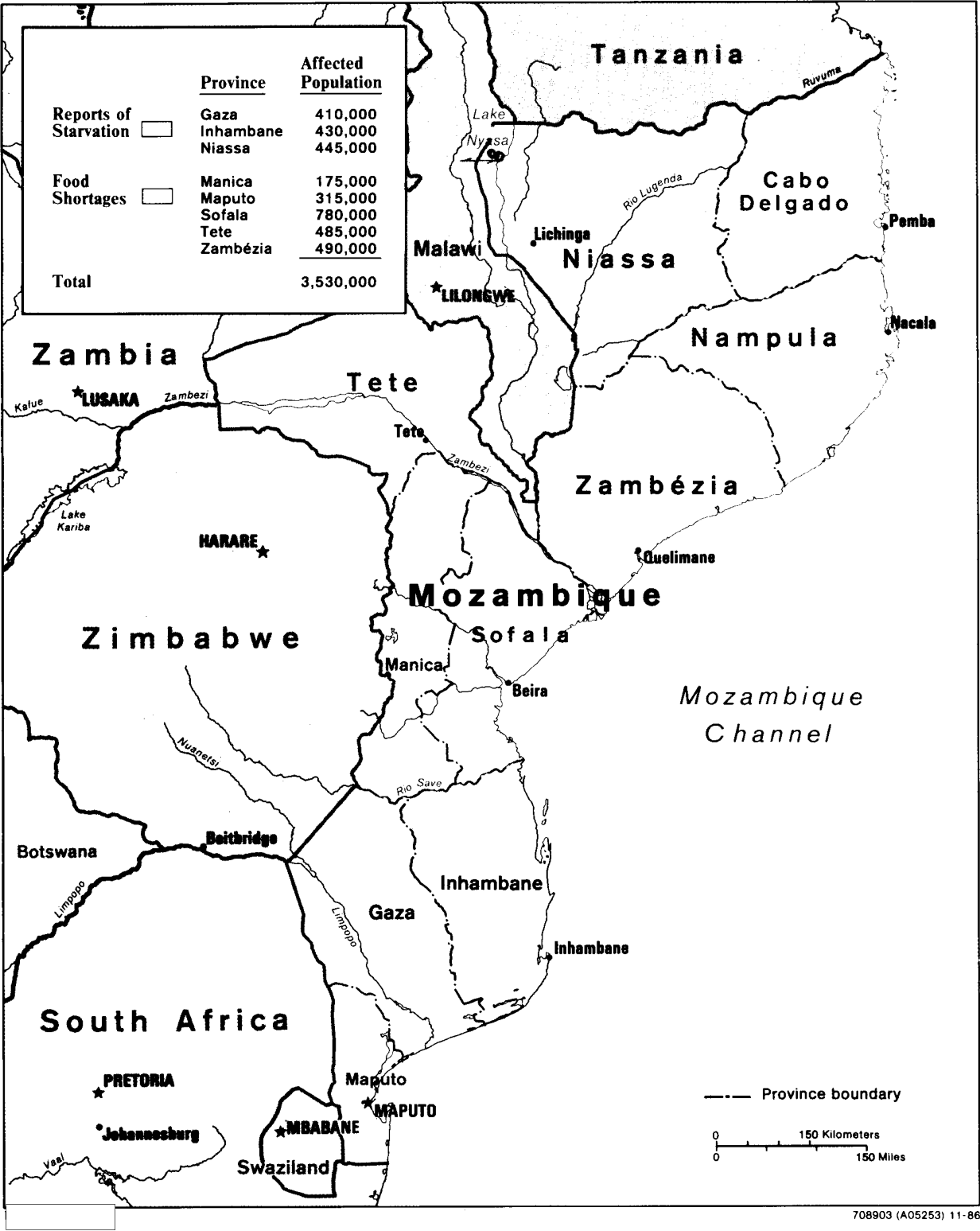
Any positive results from reforms already taken--removing some price controls and beginning the process of returning farm land and small factories to private ownership--have been weakened by the destructive impact of the RENAMO insurgency. According to US Embassy and press reports, attacks on transport routes, for example, have halted coal exports, contributed heavily to a decline in transport services to South Africa, Zimbabwe, and other neighboring countries--from 17 million tons annually in the mid-1970s to less than 5 million tons now--and severely hampered distribution of fuel, spare parts, and consumer goods. Fuel and spare parts shortages as well as direct RENAMO attacks have shut down the country's six sugar refineries, closed sawmills, and ended titanium mining operations. Attacks in Zambezia province last July exemplify RENAMO's ability to disrupt farming;

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Serious shortages of foreign exchange impose severe constraints on government efforts to increase the



Food Shortages in Mozambique



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effectiveness of the economic reform program, in our view. Foreign exchange shortages are as much or more the cause of countrywide scarcities of fuel, spare parts, raw materials, and consumer goods as direct insurgent attacks against domestic facilities. Pretoria's recent decision to end recruitment of Mozambican labor for South African mines will cost Mozambique, according to our calculations, about \$50 million a year, nearly as much as the value of total commodity exports. Even before this loss, a review of the reporting indicates service payments on Mozambique's foreign debt had equaled as much as 200 percent of exports.

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### Relations with South Africa

Chissano's domestic challenges occur within the larger context of sharply deteriorating relations with South Africa and the rapid fraying of the Nkomati Accord. Before Machel's death, officials in Maputo had expressed bitterness over Pretoria's failure to implement the economic trade and aid promised under the Nkomati agreement and claimed that Pretoria had been providing significant

[redacted] and Embassy

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reporting. For its part, South Africa charged [redacted] that ANC guerrillas operating out of Mozambique with the aid of Machel's security officials were responsible for a series of landmine incidents along the border. Bilateral relations were further strained by Pretoria's decision to gradually expel some 60,000 Mozambican workers from South Africa and its well publicized threats to use force if Maputo failed to rein in the ANC. [redacted]

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### Maintaining Foreign Support

We believe Chissano, at least initially, will attempt to avoid closing any avenues of assistance desperately needed to keep the government afloat. We also believe that Chissano recognizes that he has no choice but to continue to rely on the Soviet Union as Maputo's primary source of military aid. In 1985, for example, Moscow provided approximately \$175 million in support, including additional MIG-21 interceptors and SA-2 and SA-3 surface-to-air missiles. [redacted] Soviet armored cars arriving in Beira harbor. In addition, some 800 Soviet and 500-1000 Cuban military advisers now in Mozambique provide logistic support, instruction, tactical advice, and equipment assembly, according to US Embassy reports. [redacted]

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At the same time, however, we expect that Chissano will continue to appeal to Frontline States for military help and to Western donors for increased economic assistance. Mozambique--already one of the largest recipients of foreign economic aid in sub-Saharan Africa--is likely to become even more dependent on outside assistance, which totaled more than \$300 million in 1986, according to the US Embassy. Aid-supported projects are under way in almost all sectors of the economy, and aid disbursements exceed foreign exchange earnings from exports of goods and services. Western Europe has provided project aid, and the United States remains the leading supplier of emergency food assistance. In addition, these countries, along with Japan and South Africa, are Mozambique's principal trading partners. [ ]

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### Prospects

During the next six months, we believe Chissano will attempt to avoid precipitous policy shifts, forging a consensus among contending FRELIMO factions, keeping the sputtering economic reform program going, and maintaining established directions in Mozambique's foreign policy. Safeguarding his position within FRELIMO will clearly be Chissano's first priority. We expect that he will invoke Machel's legacy in an effort to maintain at least temporary unity among competing ethnic, racial, and ideological factions while he seeks to gain firmer control of the party, government, and military hierarchies by placing his own loyalists in key posts. [ ]

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Chissano's options for dealing with Mozambique's immediate problems are limited, however, and we believe he will be soon forced to respond to events over which he has little control. A major RENAMO offensive with South Africa backing, for example, could force Chissano to turn increasingly to the Soviet Union in hopes of military rescue. [ ]

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In our judgment, the most immediate threat to Chissano is likely to come from within FRELIMO and the military. Although we have no evidence that those favoring more radical domestic and foreign policies have begun plotting, FRELIMO hardliners are almost sure to be tempted to try to move against Chissano before he can consolidate his position. We also believe Chissano remains vulnerable to a coup by the armed forces. A sharp deterioration in the military situation--either as a result of a RENAMO offensive or the Mozambican Army's incompetence--could crystalize the military's uncertainty about Chissano and fuel sentiment among some officers that only a military man can hold the government together and successfully negotiate with RENAMO. [ ]

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Militarily, we believe the best Chissano can hope for in the short run is to slow RENAMO's advance while he begins the difficult task of revitalizing Mozambique's battered armed forces. We expect that Chissano will give priority to securing additional outside support from any source to prevent a major defeat. He almost certainly will seek additional military aid from Moscow, while continuing to plead with Western donors and fellow Frontline States for both economic and military assistance. Although we see little prospect for negotiations during the next six months, we believe that should his short-run strategy succeed, Chissano could prove more flexible than Machel and possibly open behind-the-scenes communications with RENAMO.

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Relations between South Africa and Mozambique are likely to remain tense. In our judgment, Chissano will walk a fine line that allows him to take a tough public stance condemning Pretoria, while trying to keep open a private dialogue. Although we believe South Africa is likely to take a wait-and-see attitude toward the new government, it will take direct, punitive action against ANC targets in Mozambique if it believes Maputo has continued to support ANC guerrillas. Moreover, Pretoria will probably continue to provide aid to RENAMO, and possibly increase its support, if Chissano shows signs of intransigence.

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#### Implications for the US

In our judgment, Chissano probably will be initially more cautious than Machel in expanding US-Mozambican bilateral cooperation, in part to avoid antagonizing hardline FRELIMO colleagues. In an uncertain political climate, we expect that Chissano will try to keep relations on an even keel. A deterioration in the military situation, however, followed by a sharp turn toward the Soviet Union, probably would lead Chissano to take a harsher stance against Washington. Such a posture would probably be marked by claims that Washington supported Pretoria and charges of outside support for RENAMO.

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US interests in the region would probably be ill served by a coup from virtually any of the forces now able to contemplate it. In our view, Chissano--despite his uncertain prospects--has the best chance of crafting a workable political and military consensus in Maputo, since pro-Soviet contenders and other members of the leadership appear to lack equivalent political skills or experience.

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Appendix: Key Mozambican Leaders

In our judgment, Chissano, a longtime Politburo member, owed his front-runner status to his reputation, experience, and personal ties to Machel. On the Mozambican political spectrum, he is generally viewed as a nationalist with strong socialist leanings. Although a civilian, he holds an honorary military rank of major general. [ ]

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Chissano has criticized the US in the past, but generally has supported stronger ties to the West, in part to back the government's economic reform program. Nevertheless, he probably will not establish the close relationship that US diplomats enjoyed with Machel. Although Chissano dislikes conducting business with Pretoria and is sympathetic to the ANC, he recognizes the need for the Nkomati nonaggression pact and for continuing dialogue with South Africa to maintain regional and domestic stability, according to the US Embassy. [ ]

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Chissano, 47 years old, joined the ruling Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) in 1963. He has served as Minister of Foreign Affairs since independence in 1975. He has visited the United States several times, most recently during a trip to the UN in 1986 just before Machel's death.

General Alberto Chipande, Minister of Defense, is a nationalist who favors a balance of Western economic aid and Soviet military assistance. He probably favors continued ties with socialist allies and has refused to support negotiations with RENAMO. Although Chipande was a longtime Machel associate, he was named governor of the remote Province of Cabo Delgado in 1983 in what was widely viewed as an attempt by Machel to remove him from the center of government. Chipande had gained a strong military following during the war for independence, however, and he never relinquished his defense ministry portfolio. He returned to Maputo earlier this year to resume these duties; we expect him to play an important role under Chissano. [ ]

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Chipande, 47, is a longtime Politburo member who has held his ministerial post since independence in 1975. He is the only member of the Maconde ethnic group of northeast Mozambique to hold a prominent government position. [ ]

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Prime Minister Mario Machungo will probably remain in charge of economic issues, leaving Chissano free to focus on defense and foreign policy. Although Machungo is a

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Politburo member, he is not considered particularly influential. Moreover, he is the only Politburo member who did not fight in the liberation struggle and is not particularly popular in military circles. Machungo once had a reputation as a leftwing ideologue who supported economic centralism, but we believe he now holds more moderate views. Although he favors the objectives of the ANC, Machungo probably supports Chissano's endorsement of the Nkomati Accord. [ ]

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Machungo, 46, is a tough taskmaster who may bring some order to often inefficient government operations, according to US diplomats. An experienced official, Machungo has headed the Ministries of Economics, Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Planning. [ ]

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Lieutenant General Armando Guebuza, a Minister of State, oversees the Ministries of Agriculture, Industry, and Trade and is a close friend of Chissano, according to US diplomats. However, Guebuza has criticized many of the moderate policies that Chissano appears to favor. In 1984 Guebuza was removed as Interior Minister after objecting to the Nkomati Accord, and we believe he probably continues to favor ANC operations within Mozambique. Guebuza, 43 years old, was considered a key contender for the presidency. A longtime member of the Politburo, he was named to his present post in May 1986. [ ]

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Guebuza enjoys significant political support within the military, in part because of his toughness, charisma, and dislike of whites, according to some US diplomats. Guebuza is almost certainly guaranteed a prominent role in the new government given his strong support in the military and his own ethnic group, the Makua of northeast Mozambique. [ ]

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Marcelino dos Santos, Secretary General of the National Assembly, probably will add little, if any, substance to his largely ceremonial position. Although he was ranked second in the Politburo, dos Santos probably had little hope of assuming Machel's position because of his mixed racial background. A hardline pro-Soviet ideologue and head of the radical faction of FRELIMO, dos Santos favors support for the ANC and remains opposed to the Nkomati Accord, economic reforms, and overtures to the West. In 1983 he was named Governor of Sofala, an appointment intended to isolate him from other leftist Politburo members in Maputo. Having recently returned from Sofala, dos Santos probably will maintain his seat on the Politburo because of the premium Chissano is likely to place on the appearance of party unity. [ ]

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Dos Santos, 57, is a founding father of FRELIMO. He has headed the Ministries of Development and Planning and

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served as Vice President in the mid-1970s. He is married to a white South African Communist. [REDACTED]

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Afonso Dhlakama, president and military commander of RENAMO, appears to be a nationalist with vague democratic ideals and a strong bias against Communism [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Although he lacks political charisma, Dhlakama shows considerable talent as a military commander and a leader who inspires remarkable loyalty. According to Western press reports, Dhlakama claims that he will not negotiate with FRELIMO unless the government agrees to "elections, a new constitution, and an open economic system". [REDACTED]

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Dhlakama, about 34, assumed his present post in 1981. He previously commanded RENAMO's military wing after leaving the FRELIMO armed forces in the mid-1970s. He is a member of the Ndau ethnic group. [REDACTED]

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SUBJECT: Mozambique: Profile and Prospects Beyond Machel

Original--Charles Freeman, Deputy Assistant Secretary  
of State, Bureau of African Affairs  
1--Clark Murdock, Director of African Affairs, NSC  
1--Donald Gregg, Office of the Vice President  
1--Stephen Sestanovich, Director, Political-Military  
Affairs, National Security Council  
1--Roy Stacy, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State,  
Bureau of African Affairs  
1--Robert Cabelly, Special Assistant to the Assistant  
Secretary of State, Bureau of African Affairs  
1--E. Gibson Lanpher, Director, Office of Southern  
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1--Barry McConnell, Acting Assistant to the Director,  
International Security Agency.  
1--Vince Kern, Director, Africa Region, Office of the  
Assistant Secretary of Defense, International  
Security Affairs.  
1--DCI  
1--DDI  
1--NIO for Africa  
1--NIO for USSR  
1--NIC  
1--DDO/Africa  
1--DDO/AF [redacted]  
1--PDB Staff  
1--ILS  
1--C/DDI/PES  
1--D/ALA  
1--ALA Research Director  
2--ALA/PS (one sourced copy; one clean)  
4--OCPAS/IMD/CB  
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